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## INTRODUCTION

### Master Plan Purpose

A Master Plan is a policy guide and a framework for future land use and development. It includes assessments of existing resources and issues, projections of future conditions and needs, and consideration of community goals and desires. It is a snapshot of the community portraying its characteristics and evaluating its strengths and opportunities. It then outlines the necessary steps the community needs to take to ensure that future snapshots reflect their hopes.

The Master Plan's purpose is to enable municipal officials to better direct and manage change, and to inform residents and businesses about the community's assets, challenges, trends and policies. The Master Plan can play an important role in the on-going work of Town officials and agencies. As a statement of short and long-range goals and policies, the Master Plan provides a consistent point of reference for evaluating and prioritizing potential actions.

In addition, the data and analysis contained in the Plan can be used for documentation for funding applications as well as for monitoring change over time. In order to ensure that the Master Plan continues to provide these positive impacts, all Town departments should be charged with periodically reviewing the Plan in relation to their areas of responsibility, reporting on progress in meeting Master Plan goals, and advising the Planning Board as to ways in which the Master Plan should be amended to respond to changing conditions.

The Master Plan should be closely integrated with other municipal planning documents, including those listed in the reference section at the end of each chapter of this document. As any of these documents is updated or revised, the Master Plan should be updated to reflect these changes. Conversely, the Master Plan should serve as a guide to other Town agencies in planning for investments, acquisitions and provision of services.

### **Master Plan Process**

The effectiveness of a Master Plan is directly related to the quality of the communities input in developing the Plan. The process for creating a master plan must provide an opportunity for meaningful consideration of the Town's issues by all who choose to participate. Shared values will result in clear goals and strategies for honoring those values. While different views can provide an opportunity for creative solutions to come from a commitment to help create a Town that reflects the wishes of each of its members.

The public process responsible for the development of this Master Plan is intended to be open and inclusive. The Master Plan Committee, charged with overseeing the planning process and development of the Master Plan consists of nineteen members representing diverse interests in the Town as well as different neighborhoods. The Master Plan Executive Steering Committee, a seven-member subcommittee of the MPC, deals with various administrative aspects of the planning process and assumes other responsibilities such as preparing responses to document drafts, facilitating public meetings and site audits and organizing outreach efforts. The MPC meets bi-monthly, with each of its

meetings open to the public. To encourage a broad range of participants in the process, the MPC broadcasts meetings on local cable television, lists meeting dates, agendas, presentation material and other Master Plan information on the web, seeks on-going coverage from local newspapers and holds site walks at various locations. A schedule of the meetings and their agendas follows.

April ??	Master Plan Committee Meeting #1 <i>Topic: Consultant Selection</i>
April 30	Master Plan Committee Meeting #2 <i>Topic: Master Plan Introduction and Overview</i>
June 4	Master Plan Committee Meeting #3 <i>Topic: Housing/Community Services and Facilities</i>
June 18	Master Plan Committee Meeting #4 <i>Topic: Environmental &amp; Cultural Resources/Recreation</i>
July 16	Master Plan Committee Meeting #5 <i>Topic: Evaluation of process, Plan format, visioning workshop</i>
July 30	Master Plan Committee Meeting #6 <i>Topic: Economic Development/Transportation</i>

## Salisbury Master Plan

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- Aug. 6      Master Plan Committee Meeting #7/Public Workshop  
*Topic: Beach District*
- Aug. 20     Master Plan Committee Meeting #8/ Public Workshop  
*Topic: Existing Conditions & Trends Report/Salisbury Square*
- Sept. 17    Master Plan Committee Meeting #9  
*Topic: Visioning Workshop Preparation*
- Sept 22     Master Plan Committee Meeting #10  
*Public Visioning Workshop*
- Oct 22      Master Plan Committee Meeting #11  
*Topic: Draft Vision Statement*
- Nov. 26     Master Plan Committee Meeting #12  
*Topic: Lafayette & Bridge Roads*
- Dec. 10     Master Plan Committee Meeting #13  
*Topic: Rabbit Road and Gateways*

### Master Plan Format

The Salisbury Master Plan consists of two stand alone documents: “Existing Conditions and Trends” and “Master Plan for Change”, as well as an Executive Summary.

This document “Existing Conditions and Trends” presents the baseline report of Salisbury’s Master Plan, a detailed analysis of existing conditions and trends affecting the Town. It compiles the most current available data on land use, housing, economic development, transportation and circulation, public facilities and services, historic and natural resources, and open space. It includes estimates of the amount of potential future development (“buildout analysis”) and projections of population growth and demand for services.

The next volume of the Master Plan, “Master Plan for Change”, will present a set of goals, policies and strategies that together will describe a direction for the Town for the next ten years. The “Master Plan for Change” will be developed through consultation with and participation by, the Town’s residents, business owners and public officials.

Annotated maps within the Master Plan will show in a concise and readable format the Town’s focus areas and the vision that the community supports for each. The maps and the Executive Summary will be easy to duplicate and distribute and can be strategic tools for sharing the Town’s vision with a broad audience.

### Master Planning Focus Areas

For this Master Plan the Town is referenced according to seven key focus areas, identified on Map ? and with consideration of town-wide issues. Each focus area exhibits distinguishing characteristics, offers potential for its own unique vision and requires contextual strategies to manage change. Looking at the Town in this way allows the plan to address issues within geographic boundaries as well as consider issues that affect the entire Town. The following areas represent those regions within Salisbury that have been identified as key focus areas.

**Salisbury Plains**, in the northwest section of Town is characterized by a rural landscape with open fields and farm lands as well as forests. The vast majority of the Town's Chapter 61 designated parcels are located here (see Open Space and Recreation), representing a significant inventory of temporarily protected open spaces. The Plains is primarily residential with single family homes on large lots. New development in the Plains is typically within subdivisions.

Route 95 bisects the Plains offering local access at Toll Road and Main Street. Route 286 also known as Pike Street is a busy road with 5 intersections in need of remediation. Other local roads in the area are generally narrow and carry local traffic.

Water and sewer services in the Plains are limited to private wells and septic systems. New Water and sewer lines will stop at Main Street, generally considered the edge of the Salisbury Plains.



**The Beach District** including Salisbury Beach and its associated business and residential neighborhood is defined by the barrier beach with its uninterrupted sandy beach front and expansive salt marshes. Residential development is extremely dense close to the beach with an on-going conversion of former cottages to year round homes. Homes along Beach Road are typified by medium lot single-family units. Beach Road is experiencing rapid growth of new developments consisting of medium to large size condominium projects. A large number of residential units within the Beach District serve as seasonal homes.

Commercial uses within the Beach district include quick service convenience restaurants, lounges, some, small retail shops and motels and campgrounds. These are located primarily along Beach Road (Route 1A) and scattered amongst the residential streets close to the water. A recently adopted zoning overlay district intended to spur redevelopment of underutilized beachfront commercial property has initiated discussions of several large mixed use development projects. The town is well posed to direct new growth in the Beach District.

Route 1A also known as Beach Road (and North End Boulevard as it runs north south) is the only access-way to the Beach District from within Salisbury. It is extremely busy during the summer, particularly on weekends. The other local roads within the district are narrow and provide no through access to locations outside the district.



Salisbury Beach State Reservation is a key destination within the Beach District. It is one of the state's most popular ocean beaches with 3.8 miles of ocean frontage. This 521-acre park offers swimming, boating, fishing and camping, and is very popular with trailer campers. Facilities include a 484-site campground with renovated bathhouses, extensive day-use parking lots, three comfort stations with over the dune boardwalks, and a playground and pavilion area. The facility also has two boat ramps that are located on the Merrimack River at the campground's southern edge.

The Beach District is served by public water and sewer though the sewer system is in need of repairs and replacement especially south of Beach Road.

**Salisbury Square** is a colonial village center with churches, municipal buildings and village residences. Today it is further defined by the intersection of three major state highways; Routes 1, 1A and 110, and the seasonally excessive traffic that results.

Commercial uses in Salisbury Square focus on auto oriented services, quick service restaurants, and convenience stores.



Open space and recreational sites within Salisbury Square include the Town Square, a 1.3 acre passive green space home to the public library. The Square is surrounded by roads on each side and suffers from lack visibility and poor connections to surrounding properties. The Memorial School 5 ½ acre site includes fields and courts as well as a playground. Lions Park is a recently improved 13 acre park with courts, ball fields, restrooms, a concession stand and a pavilion. Future rail trails offer opportunities to connect to both Lions Park and the Memorial School Site creating a nexus of trails in Salisbury Square Village.

There has been little new residential development in the Square as it is already relatively densely settled. However, redevelopment and infill are now supported by new zoning districts and ordinances intended to increase both residential density and mixed uses in the Square.

Salisbury Square is totally serviced by public water and sewer.

**Rings Island** once a colonial fishing village faces Newburyport on the Merrimack River and supports a neighborhood of restored antique homes and riverfront marine businesses. While no new development is taking place on Rings Island, residential upgrades and infill are occurring.



Rings Island has no major roads, but can be accessed directly off Route 1 or via Route 1A. Local roads are narrow and carry small volumes of traffic. It is not serviced by town water or sewer.

**Elm Street Corridor** is a commercial zone between Interstate 95 and Route 1. It hosts a variety of businesses and development forms from strip malls to individual businesses. All services are automobile oriented often with wide and or multiple curb cuts and expanses of parking abutting the street. Very little residential development exists along the corridor. New commercial development has been following the historic pattern.

Further development in the area is limited by the lack of depth suitable for building along the south side of Elm Street as much of the area is wetland.

Route 110 is a major state road and carries a significant amount of local and regional traffic as many of the businesses along the corridor service abutting communities as well. A limited amount of local roads connect to Route 110. Elm Street Corridor is serviced by public water and sewer.

**Route 1 Corridor** supports a mixture of residential and commercial uses and is thought of as two areas within the Town: Lafayette Road to the north of Salisbury Square and Bridge Road to the south. The corridor is similar to Elm Street Corridor in its diversity of uses and form although there is a distinction from the north to the south. Along Lafayette Road, in the north, there is a greater mix of residential properties both along Route 110 and on the side roads that have spurs off it. New development in this area consists of primarily single family residential and single use commercial buildings, however a **220 Unit Condominium is under consideration.** Public water and sewer are not currently available along Lafayette road north of Schoolhouse Lane, although the Town hopes to fund this study in the near future.

Along Bridge Road, south of Salisbury Square, the frontage is almost exclusively commercial with marshland also a prominent aspect of the landscape. Only one





set of roads intersects Bridge Road, just prior to it crossing the Merrimack River. While there has been some recent new development in this area including a large condominium set away from the road front, future development will be challenging due to wetland constraints. However, redevelopment could represent significant opportunities. Bridge Road is serviced by public water and sewer.

**Rabbit Road**, running along Interstate 95 is zoned for and supports commercial and industrial properties as well as residential properties. Salisbury's Industrial Park on the north section of Rabbit Road is home to \_\_\_\_\_ businesses, primarily light industrial, construction and warehousing. Residential properties often abut these uses indicating a need for appropriate site plan regulations to assure there are adequate set backs, buffers, and design and operational standards to allow uses to peacefully co-exist.

Lack of water and waste water service have historically limited development along Rabbit Road, however, with these services anticipated in the near future, additional development is expected.

## References

Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2006

Salisbury Community Development Plan, 2004

Salisbury Zoning

Interview with DPW Director, Don Levesque, July 19, 2007

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/northeast/salb.htm>, July 2007